



# Shringabhuja

No. 378 Rs. 5/-

*Based on a story from the Kathasaritsagara*



# Amar Chitra Katha

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## Shringabhuja

Shringabhuja is a story from the Kathasaritsagara, a Sanskrit classic of the eleventh century, written by Somadeva. Prince Shringabhuja, the hero, in search of his father's golden arrow comes across a demoness Rupashikha. She falls in love with him and decides to help him. The result is a fascinating blend of the world of men and the world of demons, in which fantasy, adventure and romance hold the reader enthralled.

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# Shringabhujā



KING VIRABHUJA OF VARDHAMANA RULED  
OVER A FLOURISHING KINGDOM OF  
HAPPY SUBJECTS SECURE IN THE  
KNOWLEDGE OF A WISE AND JUST RULE.



THE KING HAD A HUNDRED WIVES, OF WHOM GUNAVARA WAS THE CHIEF QUEEN. THE KING WAS CHILDLESS, AND FELT UNHAPPY ABOUT IT.

I WORRY ABOUT MY KINGDOM. WHO WILL INHERIT IT?

IT IS A PITY, YOUR MAJESTY, THAT NOT ONE OF YOUR HUNDRED WIVES HAS BEEN ABLE TO GIVE YOU AN HEIR.



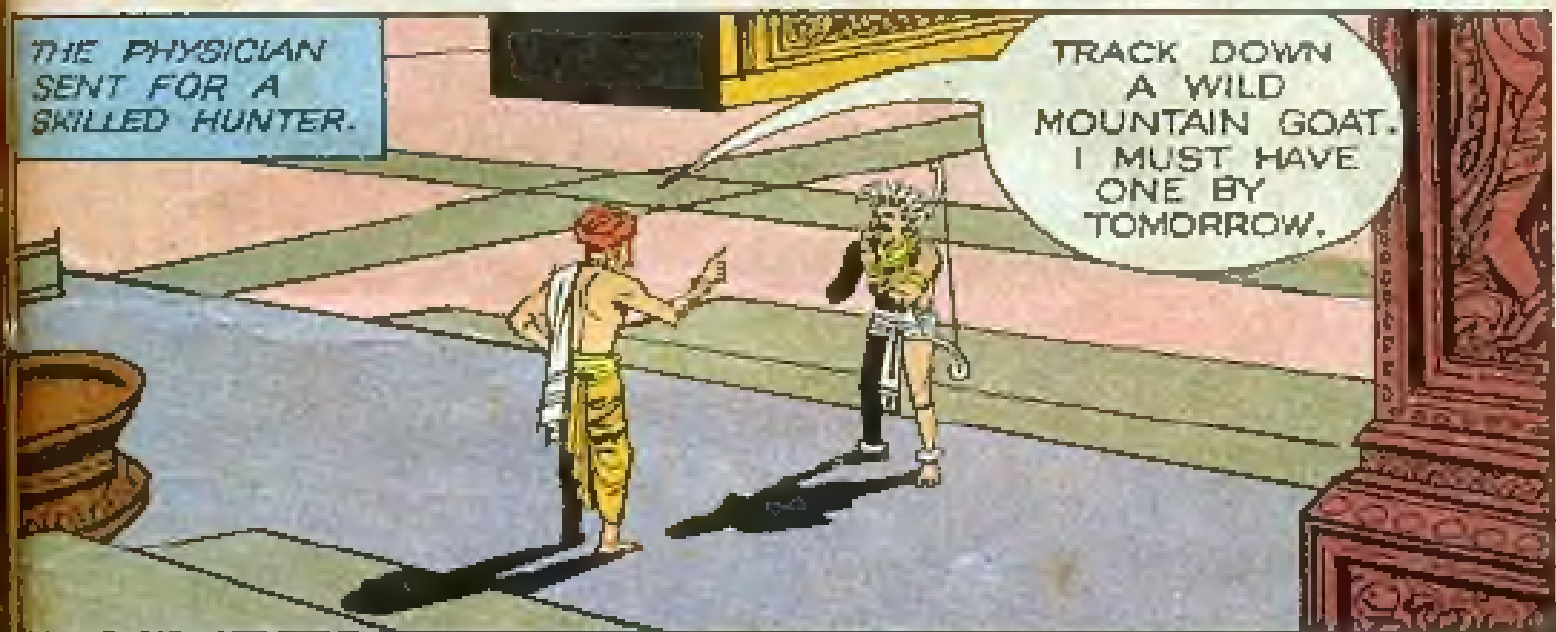
I CARE LITTLE ABOUT THE OTHERS, BUT I WISH YOU...

IT IS GOD'S WILL, MY LORD.

THE KING, HOWEVER, DID NOT RESIGN HIMSELF TO FATE. HE SENT FOR THE COURT PHYSICIAN.

YOU KNOW WHAT IS TROUBLING ME. IS THERE NO WAY?

THERE IS, YOUR MAJESTY.



THE QUEENS ASSEMBLED IN THE ROYAL DINING HALL. AVASOLEKHA, ONE OF THE QUEENS, NOTICED THAT GUNAVARA WAS NOT THERE.



GOOD. I HOPE SHE ARRIVES LATE. IF SHE HAS A SON, OUR CHILDREN DON'T STAND A CHANCE.

THE PHYSICIAN ANNOUNCED-



MY BREW IS READY!

THE PRIEST PRONOUNCED THE BLESSINGS...



ALL YOU QUEENS OF VIRABHUA- MAY YOU BEAR HIM SPLENDID SONS!

...AND THE QUEENS DRANK UP THE MAGIC POTION.





JUST AS THE LAST CUP  
HAD BEEN DRAINED—

QUEEN  
GUNAVARA!  
HOW COULD  
WE HAVE  
OVERLOOKED  
HER?

THE KING  
WILL NEVER  
FORGIVE  
US!



KING  
VIRABHUJA  
AND QUEEN  
GUNAVARA  
ARE HERE!



WHAT  
SHALL WE  
DO?

THE KING WAVED GUNAVARA  
INTO THE ROOM.

MY QUEEN,  
YOU HAVE FASTED  
AND PRAYED FOR  
THREE DAYS. MAY YOUR  
DEVOTIONS MEET  
WITH SPECIAL  
SUCCESS.

HOW HE  
DOTES  
ON HER!





AS THE QUEENS, DREADING THE KING'S ANGER, HURRIED AWAY —





WHILE THE PHYSICIAN WAITED  
FOR THE COOK TO ARRIVE—



THE COOK ARRIVED AND —



HIS PREDICTION PROVED TRUE.



WHAT SHALL WE NAME HIM ?

THE HORN IS WHAT GAVE HIM TO US. SO, WE SHALL CALL HIM SHRINGABHUA.

SHRINGABHUA BECAME THE UNQUESTIONED FAVOURITE OF THE KING. THE QUEENS WERE JEALOUS.



THE KING HAS NO EYES OR EARS FOR OUR SONS.

IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING SOON, THEY WILL HAVE NO SHARE IN HIS AFFECTIONS OR HIS KINGDOM.

AYASOLEKHA TOOK THE LEAD. SHE TALKED TO THE CHILDREN IN GROUPS, SPREADING HER JEALOUSY LIKE POISON.



THERE ARE NINETY-NINE OF YOU. IF YOU JOIN FORCES, SHRINGABHUA CANNOT WIN.

AND AS FOR GUNAVARA, I WILL SEE THAT SHE FALLS FROM GRACE.



\*'SHRINGA' MEANS 'HORN'

THAT NIGHT,  
WHEN THE KING  
VISITED HER—

YOU ARE NOT  
YOUR USUAL  
SMILING SELF  
WHAT'S WORRYING  
YOU?

I DON'T KNOW  
HOW TO SAY IT.  
PROMISE YOU WON'T  
BE ANGRY WITH ME.  
ONLY THEN WILL  
TELL YOU.

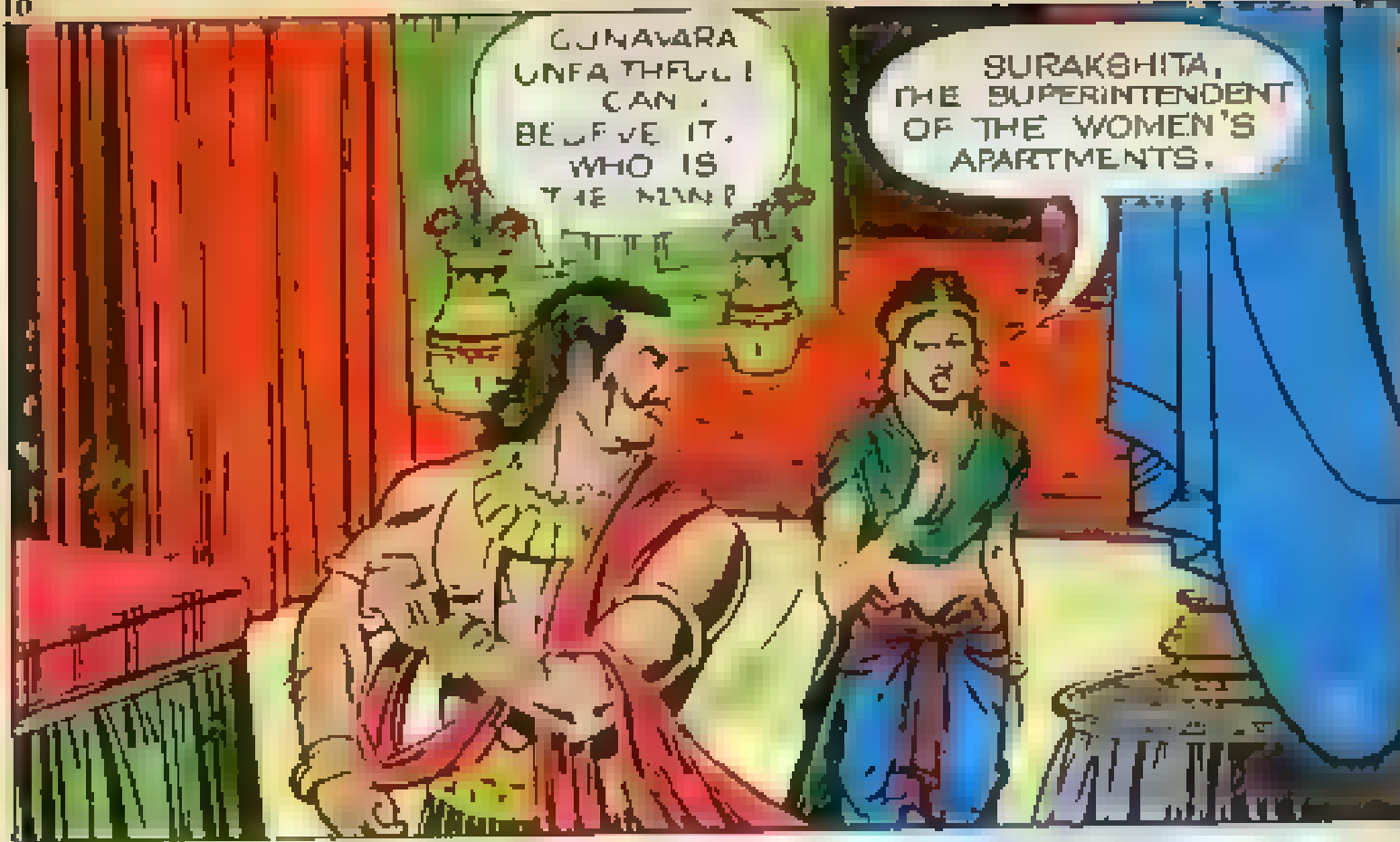
PROMISE  
NOW, WHAT  
IS IT?

MY LORD.  
QUEEN  
GUNAVARA

WHAT ABOUT  
GUNAVARA?  
WHY DO YOU  
HESTATE?

MY LORD,  
TODAY IT IS  
PALACE GOSSIP  
TOMORROW  
IT WILL BE  
CITY GOSSIP  
SHE IS  
UNFAITHFUL

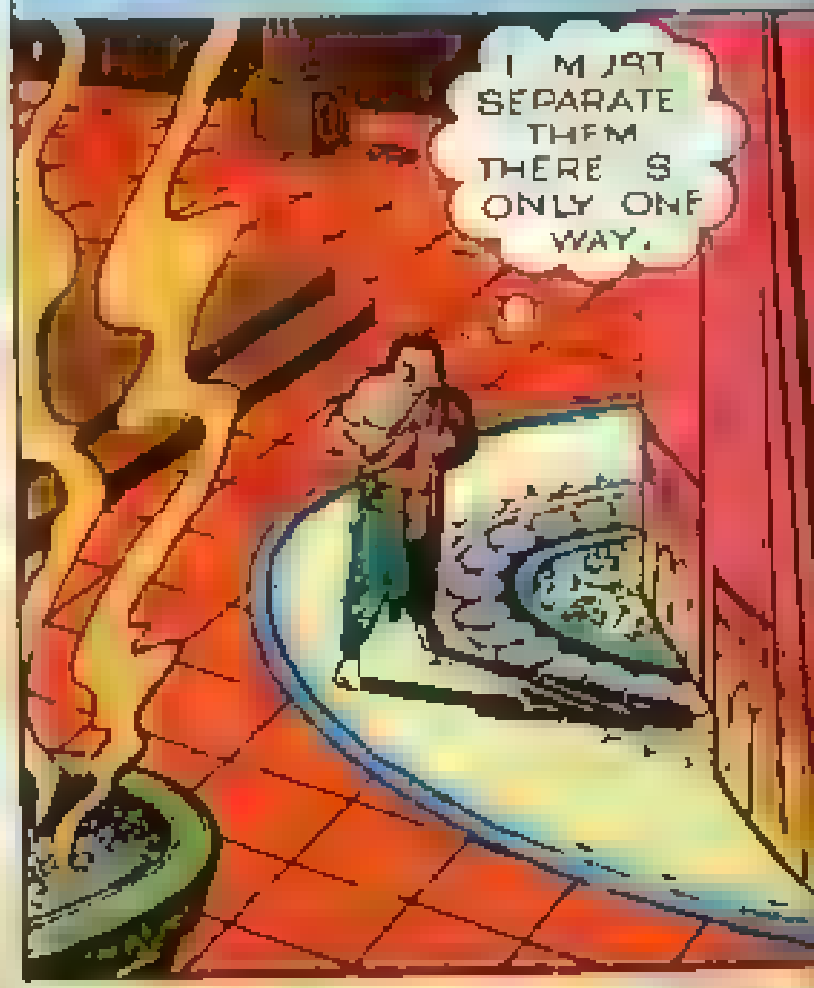




THE KING HAD LEFT—  
ALMOST BEFORE SHE  
FINISHED HER SENTENCE



THE KING PACED UP AND DOWN  
IN HIS APARTMENT. HIS THOUGHTS  
IN A FURIOUS TORMENT



RAKSHITA WAS SENT FOR. TO HIS  
ER SURPRISE -

HEAR YOU  
HAVE KILLED A  
MAN. YOU MUST  
ATONE FOR THIS  
GRIEVOUS SIN  
YOU MUST TRAVEL  
TO THE HIMALAYAS  
AND WASH AWAY  
YOUR SINS IN  
THE WATERS  
OF THE HOLY  
LAKES

THERE  
MUST BE SOME  
MISTAKE.  
I HAVE NOT  
KILLED  
ANYONE!

BUT THE KING  
ENDORSED HIS  
PROTESTS

THAT GETS  
RID OF HIM.  
NOW, FOR  
QUEEN  
GUNAVARA,  
THIS IS  
NOT GOING  
TO BE  
EASY.

HE SENT FOR QUEEN  
GUNAVARA.

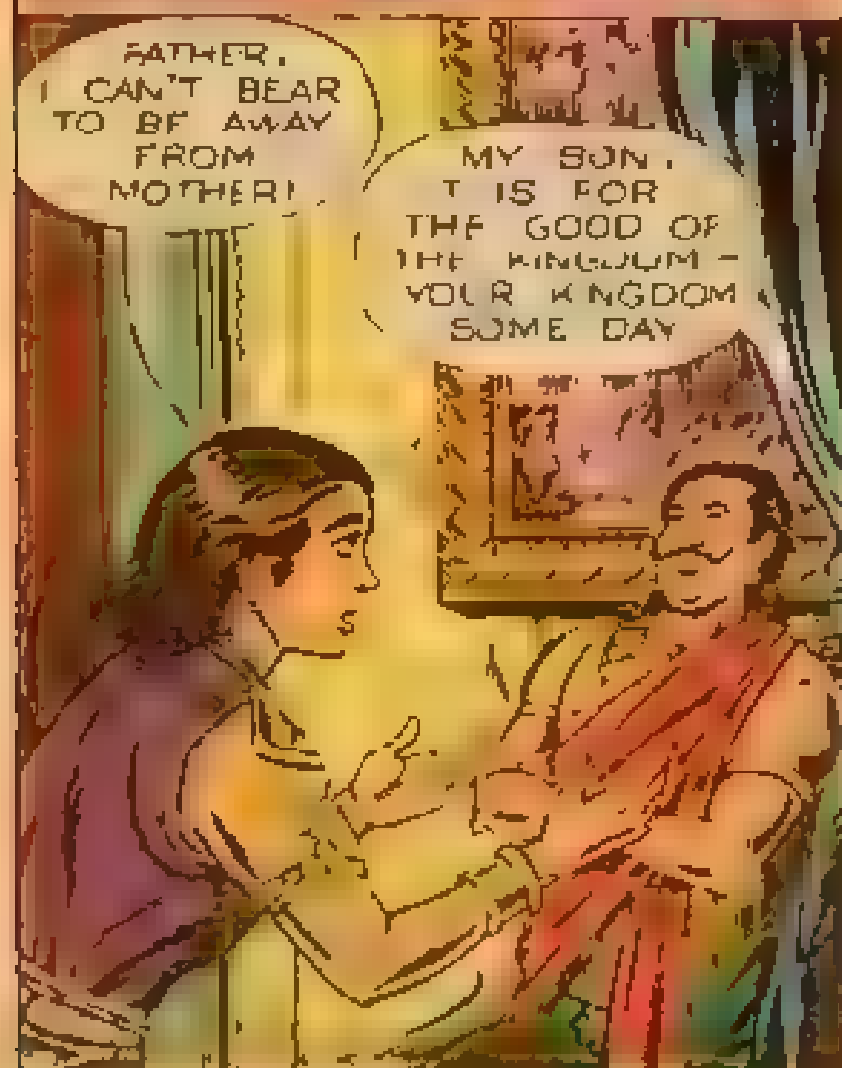
MY LORD,  
YOU  
SEEM  
VERY  
DISTURBED

AM, MY DEAREST  
THE ASTROLOGER  
SAYS YOU SHOULD  
BE IMPRISONED  
FOR A YEAR.  
FAILING THIS,  
I WILL DIE AND  
THE KINGDOM  
COME TO  
GRIEF.

IS THAT ALL,  
MY LORD? PREPARE  
THE DUNGEON AND  
I SHALL GO INTO  
IT ONLY TOO  
WILLINGLY



WHEN SHRINGABHA HEARD THE NEWS



AYASOLEKHA PUT THE REST OF HER WICKED PLAN IN ACTION SHE CALLED HER SON, NIRVASABHA -





THE OPPORTUNITY SOON AROSE.  
THAT VERY EVENING —

LOOK!  
A MAGNIFICENT  
CRANE HE'S  
FLYING QUITE  
LOW TOO

A RABBITING MENDICANT  
APPROACHED THEM

THAT IS NO  
ORDINARY CRANE  
IT IS AGNISH KHA,  
THE RAKSHASA KING  
IF YOU SHOOT HIM,  
YOU WILL BE DOING  
THE WORLD A  
GOOD TURN

THE PRINCE'S SHOT AT THE  
CRANE ONE BY ONE

WE'VE  
ALL  
MISSED

THE CRANE  
IS STILL  
CIRCLING

THE MENDICANT POINTED TO  
SHRINGABHUA WHO WAS STANDING  
A LITTLE APART

THAT YOUNG  
BROTHER  
OF YOURS  
CAN DO IT,  
I'M SURE.

SHRINGABHUA!  
SHRINGABHUA!  
EVEN THIS  
WANDERING  
MENDICANT  
SINGLES HIM  
OUT FOR  
SPECIAL  
ATTENTION

AND THEN AN IDEA, AS BRILLIANT AS IT WAS VICIOUS, STRUCK HIM

WAIT, SHRINGABHUA. GET FATHER'S GOLDEN ARROW. IT IS BEAUTIFULLY BALANCED AND FLIES STRAIGHT TO THE MARK.

WILL

THAT SHOULD FIX HIM. HE WILL HIT THE BIRD WHICH WILL DISAPPEAR WITH FATHER'S ARROW.

AND THEN HE WILL HAVE TO FACE FATHER'S WRATH

THE UNSUSPECTING SHRINGABHUA RETURNED WITH THE WEAPON, TOOK AIM AND SHOT AT THE BIRD

THE CRANE HAS FLOWN AWAY.

JUST AS I HAD PLANNED

WHAT DO WE DO ? WE DARE NOT FACE OUR FATHER YOU HAD BETTER BRING THE ARROW BACK

NEVER FEAR I WILL NOT REST TIL I DO SO



AND HE SET OFF

HE FELL INTO THE TRAP SO EASILY

HA HA!



SHRINGABHJJA FOLLOWED THE BIRD THE CRANE HAD LEFT A CLEAR TRAIL, FOR THERE WERE DROPS OF BLOOD ON THE EARTH

MY FIRST TASTE OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD STRANGE, BUT I AM NOT AFRAID.





# Quiz

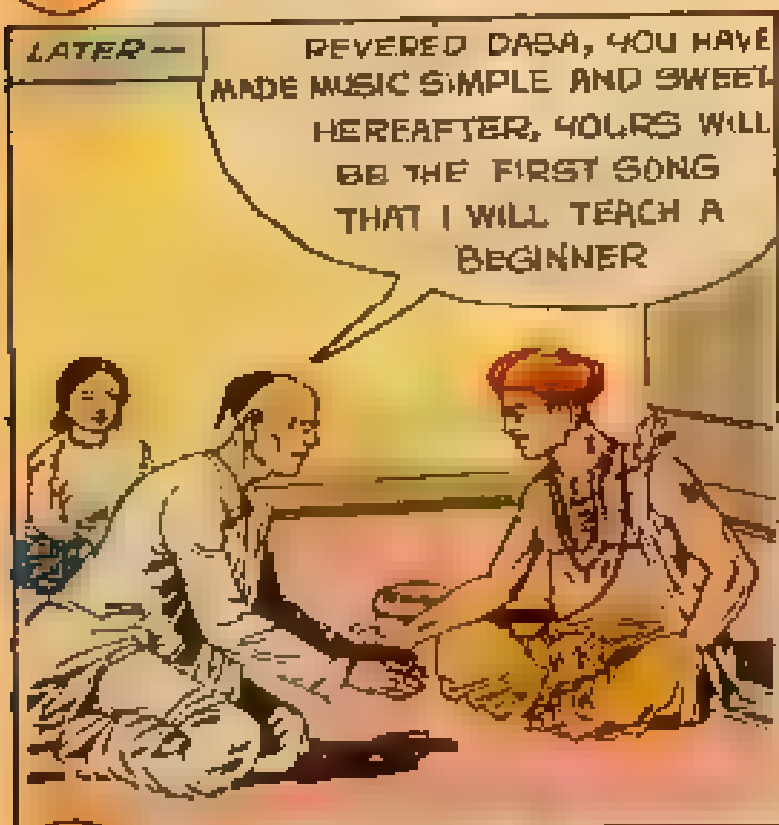
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Compiled by: Shobha Rao

III

NAME THE THINGS SHOWN  
IN THE ILLUSTRATION.

I IDENTIFY THE MEN.



II IDENTIFY THE SPEAKERS.



IV

## WHO IS THIS GREAT KING?

HE CONSTRUCTED TWO BUILDINGS  
WITHIN THE PRECINCTS OF THE PURANA  
MATHA. ONE WAS A MOSQUE AND THE  
OTHER WAS THE SHEER MANDAL.



V

## FILL IN THE BLANK.

THE WALLS OF THE LOWEST, WHICH WAS  
ON EARTH, WERE MADE OF IRON, THE  
WALLS OF THE SECOND, WHICH WAS IN THE  
HEAVENS, OF SILVER, AND THE WALLS OF THE  
THIRD, WHICH WAS  
IN HEAVEN, OF  
GOLD.



### RULES

1. Every entry must be accompanied with the coupon given on this page.
2. The first 50 all-correct entries received in our office will each receive 2 titles of Amar Chitra Katha.
3. Every correct entry will receive a green certificate.
4. Every one-error entry will receive a blue certificate.
5. Any participant who collects three green or six blue certificates till June 1987 will receive a free subscription of Amar Chitra Katha for six months.
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7. Any participant sending in five or more all-correct entries till June 1987 will be awarded a cash prize of Rs. 5,000. If there is more than one claimant the prize will be equally distributed among those who have sent five or more all-correct entries.
8. If we do not receive five all-correct entries from anyone till June 1987, the prize will be distributed among those who have sent in four all-correct entries.
9. The decision of the judges will be final and binding.
10. While claiming your prize you must quote the reference number given at the base of the certificate won by you.

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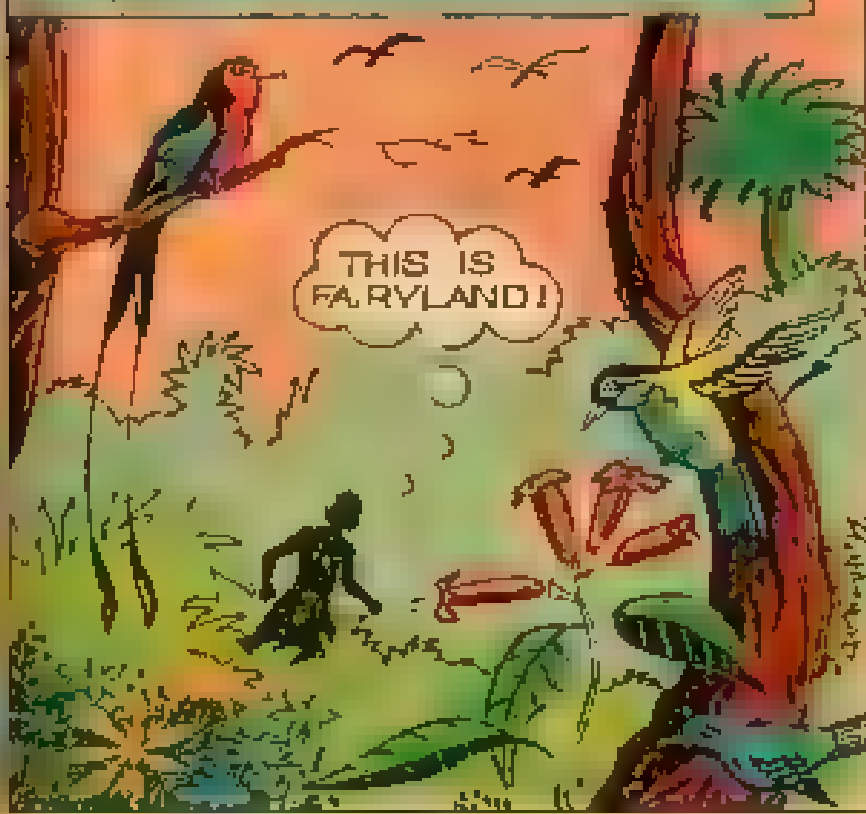
Giving Name Age Address Answers

Last date for receiving entries 30.4.1987

### Answers to Quiz India-5

- Alexander should not have been shown wearing his helmet.
- These words were addressed to Parvati by Shiva for not paying attention to what he was saying.
- Kannappa removes his own eye to replace Shiva's.
- a. Pundarik b. Humayun
- Satyabhama.

THE TRAIL STOPPED SUDDENLY AND HE FOUND HIMSELF IN A GARDEN CITY, AMIDST DENSE JUNGLE.



INDEED, IT WAS. THE TREES WERE ALIVE WITH SINGING BIRDS AND LADEN WITH SWEET-SMELLING FLOWERS



AND SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE EVENING MISTS -



AS SHE MOVED CLOSER





YOU ARE IN  
DHUMAKA RA  
AM RUDRAKHA.  
DAUGHTER OF  
ARJUN HUA

AGNISHIKHA  
THE VERY  
RAKSHASA  
WHO, IN THE  
FORM OF  
A CRANE,  
I HAVE  
WOUNDED



BEFORE HE  
COULD SPEAK

I KNOW  
OF YOUR  
EXTRAORDINARY  
SKILL IN ARCHERY  
MY FATHER IS  
NOT AN EASY  
TARGET

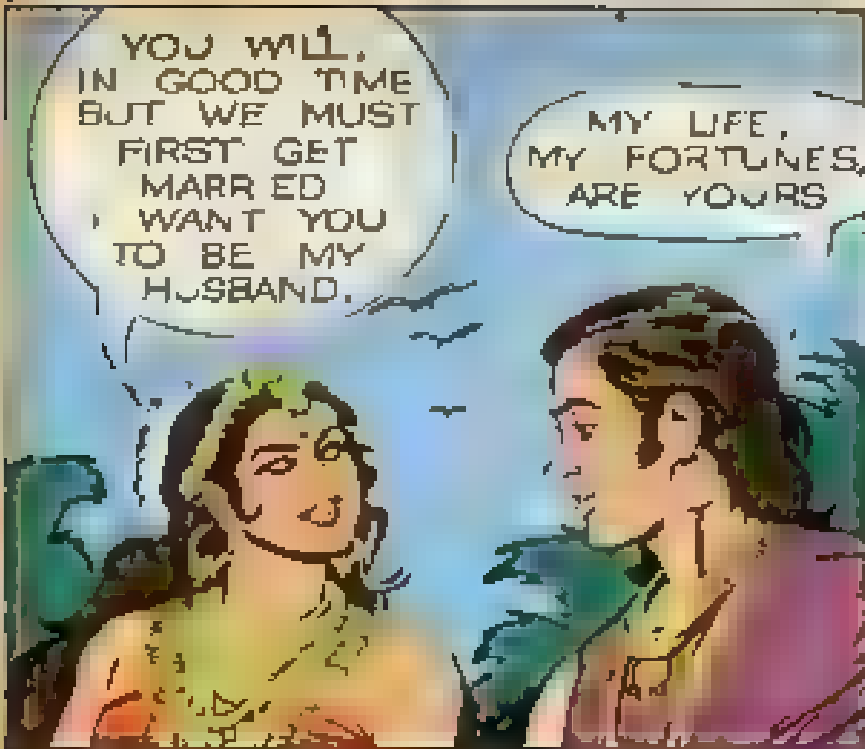


HE EVENING WOOD ON A POND, WHEN A  
OLD HER ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED

MY FATHER  
HAS BEEN NURSED  
BY MAGIC HANDS  
AND IS VERY WELL  
THE ARJUN IS  
WITH ME - I  
TOK A FAREWELL  
TO

BUT  
NOW I  
WANT  
TO  
GO  
BACK





SHRINGABHUKA WAS BROUGHT BEFORE HIM, AND THE RAKSHASA WAS ALL SMILES

MY DAUGHTER  
GIVE ME YOUR PROMISE  
NEVER TO DISOBEY ME  
AND NOW GO  
HIDE, CHANGE  
AND BE BACK  
IN AN HOUR

VERY  
WELL  
SR

AND  
RUPASHIKHA,  
BRING YOUR  
SISTERS  
HERE

RUPASHIKHA  
HID HERSELF  
AND CAUGHT  
UP WITH  
SHRINGABHUKA

KNOW WHAT  
FATHER HAS IN  
MIND, WHEN YOU  
COME, THERE WILL  
BE A HUNDRED  
WOMEN ALL ALIKE  
YOU WILL BE  
ASKED TO SINGLE  
ME OUT

WHATEVER  
WILL I  
DO?

JUST LOOK  
OUT FOR THE  
ONE WITH A  
GARLAND OVER  
HER EARS.  
THAT WILL  
BE ME

WAS JUST AS BUSHY AND THE SON OF THE  
ANALYST AND THE FIGHTER OF THE FIGHT

TAKE THE LOT  
OF SESAME SEEDS  
ALL HUNDRED BAGS  
OF THEM AND SOW  
THEM IN THE FIELD  
OUTSIDE THE  
TOWN.

YES  
SR

ANALYST AND THE FIGHTER  
WAS JUST AS BUSHY AND THE SON OF THE  
ANALYST AND THE FIGHTER

MAY HAVE  
TO USE MAGIC  
TO COMPLETE  
THE TASK BUT  
IT WILL BE  
DONE.

BUT THE BATTLE OF THE BATTLE  
WAS NOT OVER WHEN  
SHE HAD BEEN HIT BY THE

I'VE CHANGED  
MY MIND TO  
COLLECT ALL  
THE SOWN SEEDS  
AND PILE THEM  
UP AGAIN IN  
MY GRANARY



RUPASHIKHA CAME TO HIS RESCUE ONCE AGAIN.

EMER,  
YOU ARMIES  
OF ANTS  
AND GET TO  
WORK

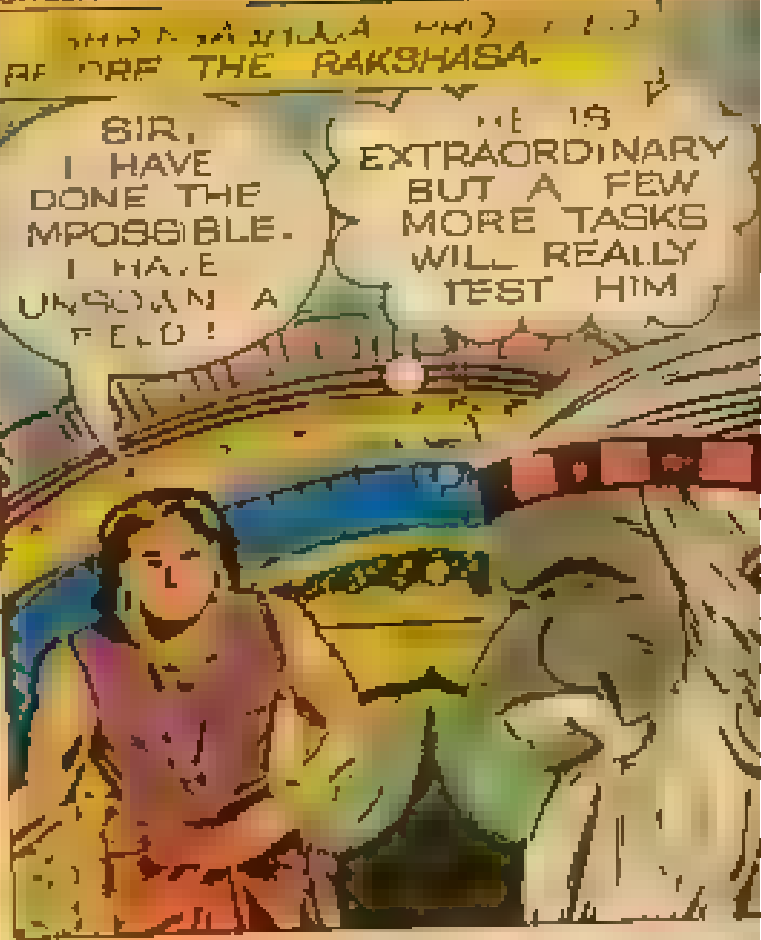
AND THE ANTS STARTED  
ABOUT, COLLECTING THE  
SEEDS WHICH.

SHR NGASHUJA WHO  
BEFORE THE RAKSHASA.

SIR,  
I HAVE  
DONE THE  
IMPOSSIBLE.  
I HAVE  
UNDOAN A  
FIELD!

HE IS  
EXTRAORDINARY  
BUT A FEW  
MORE TASKS  
WILL REALLY  
TEST HIM

JUST ONE  
MORE FRANK  
BEFORE ITS  
IN AN ABANDONED  
SHIVA TEMPLE  
MILES FROM  
HERE GO AND  
GET HIM  
FOR YOUR WEDDING  
TOMORROW



RUPASHIKHA WAS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR HER SCOLDING FATHER

MY UNCLE  
WILL TRY AND  
KILL YOU  
HERE-TAKE  
THIS EARTH,  
THIS  
WATER ..

THESE  
THORNS AND THIS  
SMOULDERING FAGGOT  
JUST KEEP THROWING  
THESE BEHIND YOU  
ONE BY ONE,  
EACH TIME MY  
UNCLE CATCHES UP  
WITH YOU.

HE RODE RUPASHIKHA'S MAGIC HORSE WITH  
THE SPEED OF WIND SOON, THE DESERTED  
TEMPLE LOOMED BEFORE HIM, DARK AND MENACING

O RUPASHIKHA,  
YOUR BROTHER  
INVITES YOU TO  
THE WEDDING OF  
HIS DAUGHTER,  
RUPASHIKHA.

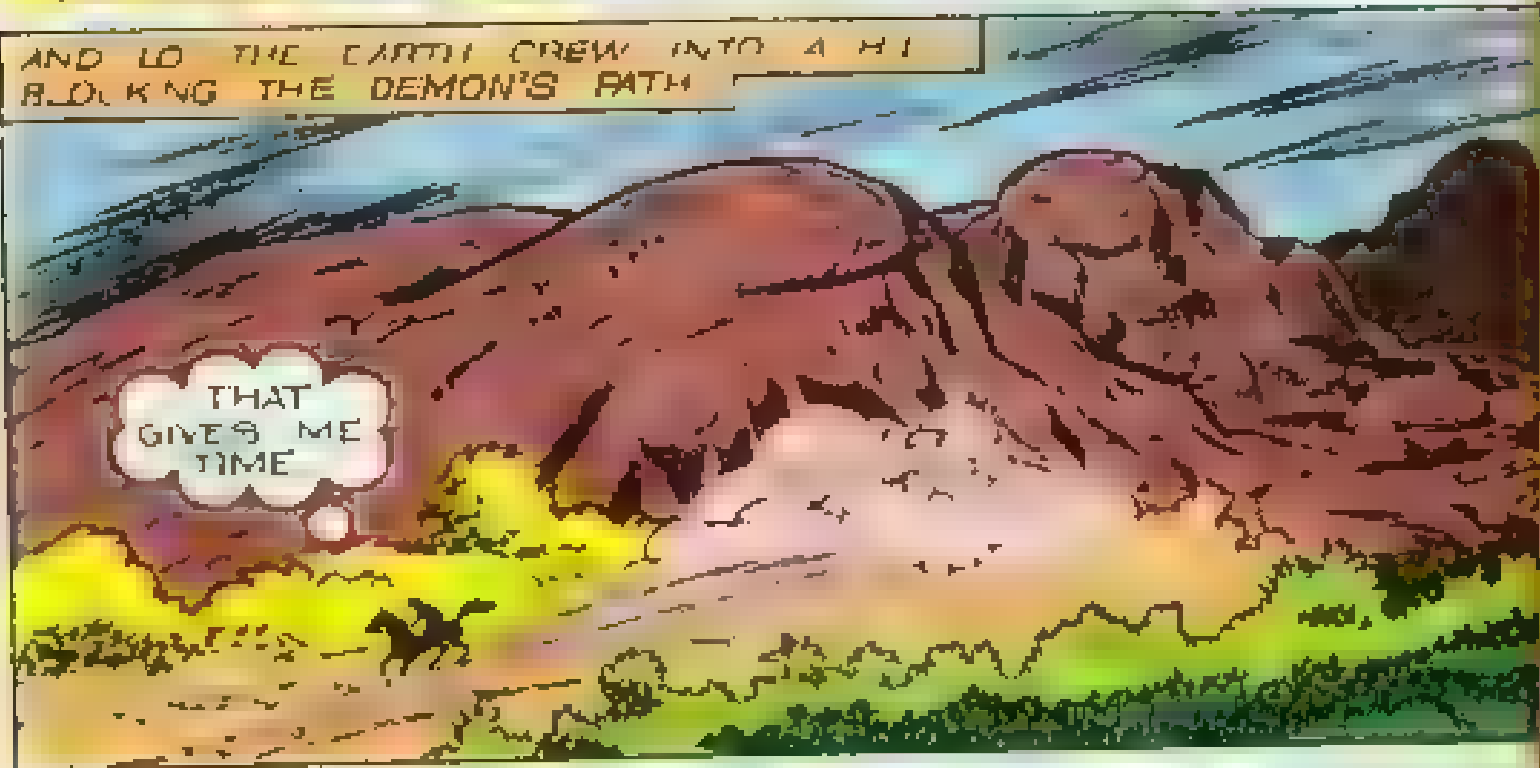
THAN, TURNING HIS HORSE HE FLEET,  
URGING IT TO GO FASTER, EVER FASTER

THERE COMES  
THE OLD DEMON  
LET ME THROW  
THE EARTH IN  
HIS PATH



AND LO THE EARTH CREW INTO A HILL  
BLOCKING THE DEMON'S PATH

THAT  
GIVES ME  
TIME



A LITTLE FARTHER ON—

THERE'S  
LIFE IN THE  
OLD DEVIL  
YET



AND HE SPRINKLED THE  
WATER BEHIND HIM...

WHICH INSTANTLY  
BECAME A HUGE  
RIVER, EDDYING  
AND SWIRLING  
BEHIND HIM

I'M NEARER  
HOME NOW, BUT  
STILL NOT OUT  
OF DANGER



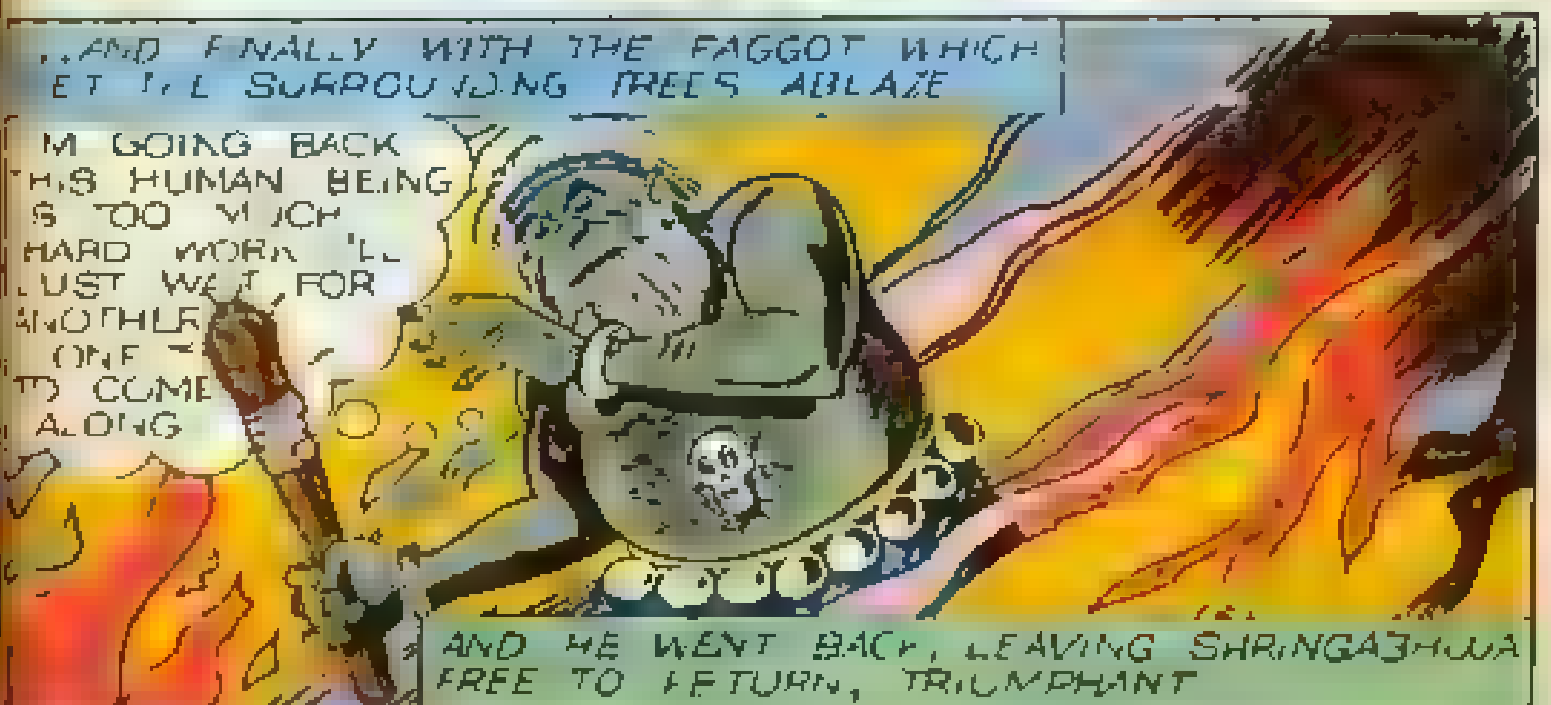
TWICE MORE HE  
BLOCKED THE  
DEMON'S PATH—  
ONCE WITH  
THE THORNS..

THIS  
THORN JUNGLE  
WILL TEAR HIM  
APART



..AND FINALLY WITH THE FAGGOT WHICH  
SET THE SURROUNDING TREES ABLAZE

I'M GOING BACK  
THIS HUMAN BEING  
IS TOO MUCH  
HARD WORK. I'LL  
JUST WAIT FOR  
ANOTHER  
ONE TO  
COME  
ALONG



AND HE WENT BACK, LEAVING SHRINGAJHWA  
FREE TO RETURN, TRIUMPHANT



AS SHRINGABHUA GALLOPED HOME

THIS IMPOSSIBLE MAN! HOW DID HE ESCAPE MY BROTHER?

WELL DONE. NOW, YOU MAY MARRY MY DAUGHTER.

THE NEXT DAY THEY WERE MARRIED A MONTH HAD PASSED

RUPASHIKHA, WE MUST GET BACK TO VARDHAMANA

THAT MEANS ANOTHER BATTLE OF WITS WITH MY FATHER

HOW DO WE DO IT?

JUST DON'T ANNOUNCE YOUR INTENTIONS. WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE A QUICK AND QUIET EXIT.

THE NEXT DAY -

WE'RE GOING OUT FOR THE DAY INTO THE FOREST.

VERY WELL, PRINCESS.

HAVE  
YOU TAKEN  
THE GOLDEN  
ARROW?

YES — AND  
ALL MY  
JEWELS. AND  
WITH ME  
COMES  
THE RIGHT  
TO HALF THE  
KINGDOM.

THERE  
COMES  
MY FATHER  
ON HIS  
FLYING  
HORSE.  
I CAN FEEL  
THE AIR  
RUSTLE.

WHAT  
NOW?

SHE USED HER POWERS  
TO MAKE HIM AND THE  
HORSE INVISIBLE ...

...DISGUISED HERSELF  
AS A WOODCUTTER...

...AND JOINED A WOODCUTTER WHO HAPPENED TO BE THERE. SOON—

WE SAW NO ONE. WE HAVE BEEN CUTTING WOOD ALL DAY— FOR KING AGNISHIKHA'S FUNERAL PYRE.

DID YOU SEE A YOUNG COUPLE PASS THIS WAY?



WHAT! ME, DEAD? I MUST RUSH HOME TO CHECK

MY FOOLISH FATHER!



AND SHE JOINED SHRINGABHUJA—

SURELY, HE MUST REALIZE HE'S NOT DEAD.

RAKSHAGAS ARE BIG AND FOOLISH.



AGNISHIKHA WAS SOON BACK. THIS TIME RUPASHIKHA WAS IN THE GUISE OF A MESSENGER.

DID YOU SEE A MAN AND A WOMAN GO BY?

NO, BUT THEN I AM SO FULL OF MY OWN SORROW I DON'T SEE ANYTHING. I'M CARRYING A MESSAGE— KING AGNISHIKHA IS ILL AND DYING.





AT VARDHAMANA, SHRINGABHUA HAD ARRIVED AND EVERYTHING WAS TOLD.





HE PLED HER  
WITH WINE.

COME,  
DRINK, MY  
QUEEN.



SOON SHE WAS  
ASLEEP — AND  
MUMBLING.

GUNAVARA,  
IF YOU WERE  
NOT IN THAT  
DUNGEON,  
WOULD THE  
KING BE  
HERE?

AHA!  
THE  
WITCH.



THE KING ACTED  
QUICKLY. HE FREED  
GUNAVARA,  
RELATING ALL  
THAT HAD  
HAPPENED.

THE WITCHES!  
I'LL IMPRISON  
THE LOT.

FORGIVE  
THEM, MY  
LORD.



THE NEXT DAY, SHRINGABHUJA WAS  
ANointed CROWN PRINCE AND ALL  
WAS WELL IN THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD  
OF VARDHAMANA ONCE AGAIN.

GOD  
BLESS YOU,  
MY SON.

